

## Police Monitoring Sick Coyotes, Shoot One

Police and Animal Control Officers have shot one sick coyote pup on Duxbury Beach, and are continuing to monitor reports of two other pups who might be sick.

"The one that was shot had open sores and appeared disoriented," Lt. Roger Banfill said. The animal was shot at 4:20 pm on July 22 on the ocean side of the beach.

Police and animal control officers respond to wild animal calls, and if the animal is sick or injured police will shoot it and the animal control officer disposes the carcass, Banfill said.

"Otherwise, we leave it alone."

Several coyote pups that have been seen on Duxbury Beach are very sick, said Harbormaster Don Beers. The sick pups are thin and mangy, Beers said.

"They were getting way too close to people, and acting very strange. They would walk in circles, lay down in the middle of the road, and lay between vehicles parked on the beach."

Two adult coyotes appeared on Duxbury Beach sometime this winter, Beers said. Then five coyote pups appeared.

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"My guess is that this was too large a [coyote] family for the food source on the beach," Beers said. He believes the sick pups were probably scorned by the pack, and left to fend for themselves.

"We were hoping there could be a peaceful coexistence between the wild animals and humans on the beach. It became a public safety hazard [when the sick animals started getting

too close] and we had to take affirmative action," Beers said.

Beers said he posted coyote warnings at the beach to try to educate the public and maintain a separation between humans and the wild animals.

As a rule of thumb, Beers says that if someone sees a coyote on Duxbury Beach more than simply in passing, they should contact a member of his staff.

Coyotes were spotted elsewhere in Duxbury this week as

well. On July 20 someone reported two baby coyotes walking alongside West Street. On July 22, a coyote was spotted on Gurnet Road, and on July 26 a Cherry Lane resident reported a coyote came after her dogs.

Residents who spot coyotes can call police who will come and investigate whether the animal is sick or not. If not, they will leave it alone or chase it off with the police siren, Banfill said.